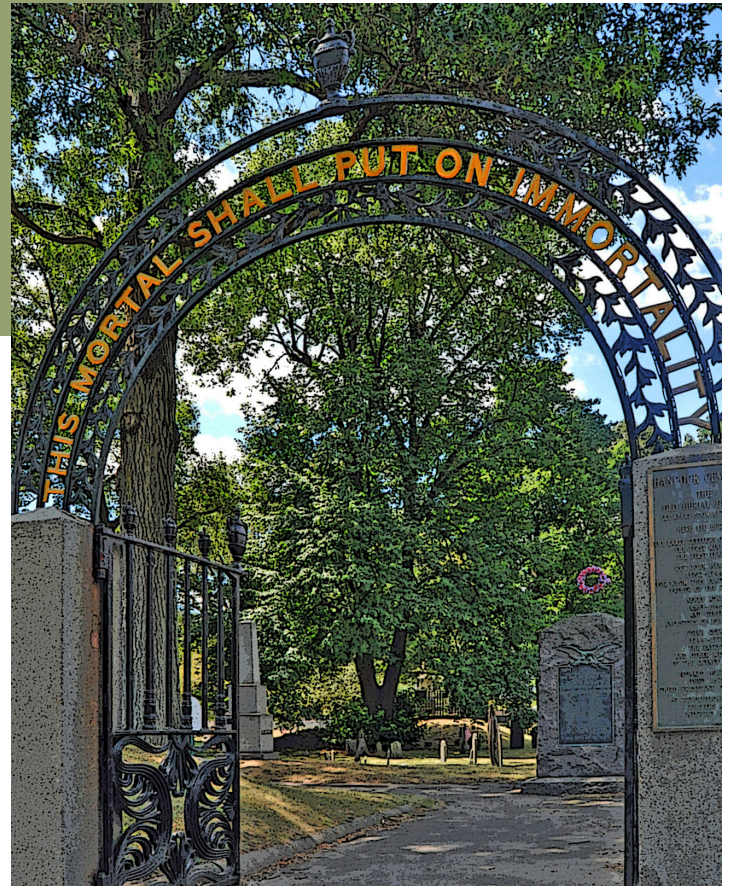
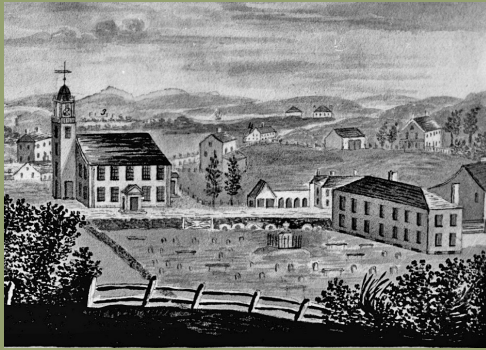


Executive Summary

2012



Honorable Thomas P. Koch, Mayor
Quincy Department of Planning and Community Development

Hancock Cemetery Master Conservation Plan

Halvorson Design Partnership

Building + Monument Conservation . Sutherland Conservation + Consulting
Northern Geomantics . Shary Page Berg

Overview

Hancock Cemetery—in its 372nd year—is one of the earliest communal places in Quincy. Like many similar places throughout the nation, it faces both opportunities and challenges. Unlike most other municipal graveyards, Hancock Cemetery is a major tourist attraction due to its direct associations with men and women prominent in the history of the nation—two Presidents and their families, and other important Revolutionary-era families such as the Hancocks and the Quincys.

It is also one of the nicest old graveyards in New England. The quality and variety of the slate markers are

extraordinary and renowned.

Most of the gravestones are in relatively good condition.

The Cemetery's collection of handsome Quincy Granite features is striking. These include several upright

monuments and walls, the base of an elegant cast iron fence and elements of the Cemetery's many mound tombs.

But Hancock Cemetery is at a crossroads. More than 150 gravestones and more than 70% of the Cemetery's eighty-five historic tombs require immediate attention. The landscape is tired; trees are overgrown. Fences need repair or replacement.

Recognizing these conditions, the City of Quincy commissioned this multi-disciplinary Master

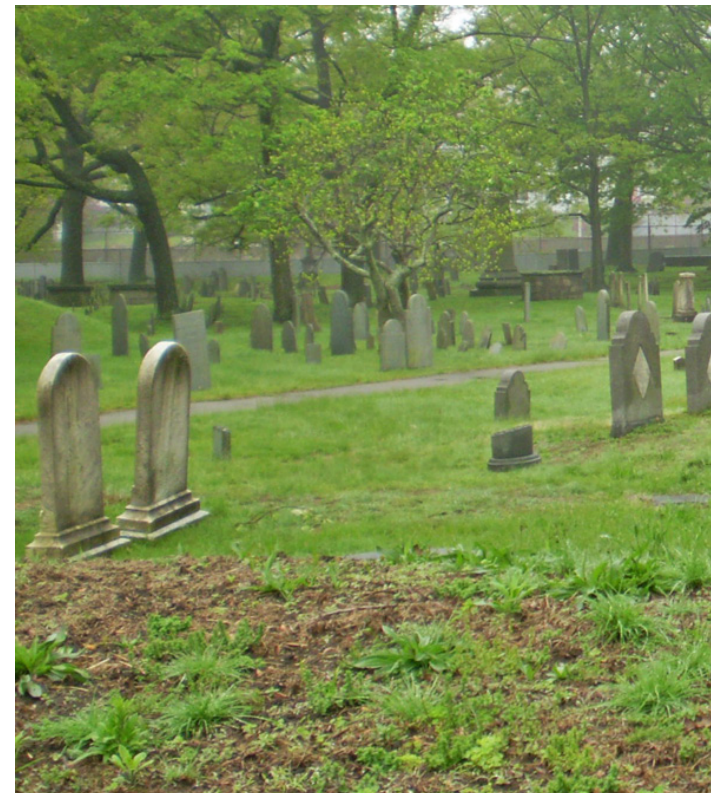
Conservation Plan. It involved an exploration of the history of the property and a detailed inventory and assessment of the Cemetery's memorials and landscape features—

leading to a comprehensive program for stabilization, restoration, repair, maintenance and interpretation of this valuable resource.

Directed by the Boston landscape architecture firm, Halvorson Design Partnership, the master planning team involved nationally-regarded specialists in the preservation of historic cemeteries.

The planning process involved a meticulous inventory and assessment of the condition of the landscape and all of the historic "objects" in the Cemetery, creation of a photographic inventory of every object, a searchable spreadsheet of the findings and recommendations for prioritized treatment and management of the resources of the site.

The team also conducted a Training Workshop at the Cemetery, attended by 35 people, which covered the technical aspects of caring for the Cemetery and a demonstration of gravestone repair.



Conservation issues include turf failure and erosion over tombs.

"one of the nicest old graveyards in New England"

"at a crossroads"

Guiding Principles

Hancock Cemetery possesses many different qualities. It is significant to scholars, important to descendants of persons buried here and fascinating to visitors. Recognizing this, a set of Guiding Principles is presented to ensure that all of these many facets are kept in mind.

As time goes on, specific recommendations in the Plan may become outdated or no longer relevant. The Principles are intended as a "touchstone" to guide current and future decisions affecting in this public heirloom.

A significant place in history

- Preserve and reduce risk of damage to historic features in the cemetery, particularly grave markers, memorials, walls and ornamental fences and gateways.
- Seek to uncover additional information about the site, such as unmarked graves, and missing grave markers and fragments.
- Identify and maintain the integrity of the Cemetery boundaries.
- Enhance the feeling of being in an historic place by screening or ameliorating distracting abutting views.
- Protect the historic views and vistas visible from the Cemetery.

A source of genealogical and cultural information

- Preserve as much remaining information on each object as possible.
- Increase public availability and ease of access to such information.

A priceless collection of folk art

- Preserve integrity of memorial design, materials and workmanship.

A place where human remains have been interred

- Abide by all laws regarding graves, grave sites and memorials.
- Obtain archaeological consultation prior to disturbing any subsurface areas.

A place of contemplation and reflection

- Preserve and enhance the character of the Cemetery for the public's quiet enjoyment.

A resource for learning

- Provide public information and interpretation about the Cemetery and its resources.

A pleasant green respite in the center of the city

- Maintain lawns and shade and flowering trees in good health, while ensuring that risk of damage to memorials is minimized.

A place that many people are likely to care about and be willing to help support

- Encourage public commitment and support for the City's conservation and use of the Cemetery.



Findings

The headstones, monuments, tombs, trees, lawns, paths and fences together create the significant cultural landscape of Hancock Cemetery. The study has identified urgent needs for conservation and repair in each category.

Grave markers + monuments

Approximately half of the 940 markers and monuments in the Cemetery exhibited no significant preservation problems—testimony to a generally good level of care over the decades and the prevalence of slate gravestones, which are very resistant to acid rain, unlike the marble and sandstone materials found here in fewer numbers.

The condition assessment of the stones revealed more than two dozen specific conditions—from lichen growth to missing fragments—that negatively affect their quality or legibility of carvings and inscriptions. The majority of the problems fall into two categories: (a) **severe leaning or tilting** and (b) **damage to the stone itself (lawn mower scrapes, breakage, cracking or delamination.)** A total of 465 markers and monuments merit some degree of attention. Of these, 156 need high priority treatment to save them.

Tombs

The principal issues for most of the 85 tombs are related to: (a) **how they were originally constructed**; (b) **nearby "volunteer" trees that dislodge tomb structure**; and (c) **deferred and (in only a few instances) improper past maintenance**. Severe issues such as outright masonry failure are not a serious problem.

One of the most common problems here relates to displaced or outward-leaning walls at the front of the tomb. The conditions that require treatment repeat themselves from tomb to tomb, and all are of high priority. Some tombs require more treatment than others but, all in all, of the 85 total tombs, 60 require work.

Landscape + access

The Plan includes an inventory and evaluation of the Cemetery's landscape features, including: topography and spatial organization, views and vistas, characteristic vegetation, and circulation.

The principal findings include:

- (a) the **visual connection between the cemetery and United First Parish Church**, is not only beautiful, it displays the important, historic links between the Cemetery and the Church;
- (b) the **chain link fence at the back of the property** lining the walkway along the MBTA tracks is unsightly and in bad repair;
- (c) **mature trees** make for a welcome leafy canopy and "park-like" setting, but several trees have disrupted tomb walls and gravestones;
- (d) **lawns** are mostly in good condition, but mowing practices are damaging many slate gravestones;
- (e) **paths** are almost level and appear to be in their historic locations, but their width does not meet accessibility guidelines. Tree roots and in one instance a bench disrupt access.

Typical treatment issues



Grave markers *Delamination*

Supporting materials

The planning team created a series of deliverables that provide additional information in support of the Plan. Listed below, these materials include mapping of the cemetery and each object in it; complete details of the inventories (in narrative, database and spreadsheet format); a custom, illustrated glossary of terms, and a comprehensive photographic record of each object. Except for Appendices J -L, these materials are included in the Master Conservation Plan document

Appendix A | 2011 marker + tomb locus maps

Appendix B | Comparison of 1930 + 2011 cemetery maps

Appendix C | Sample assessment forms

Appendix D | Illustrated glossary of Hancock Cemetery materials + conditions

Appendix E | Tomb details

Appendix F | Grave marker + tomb sample locator spreadsheet

Appendix G | Tree assessment spreadsheet

Appendix H | Tree selection guidelines

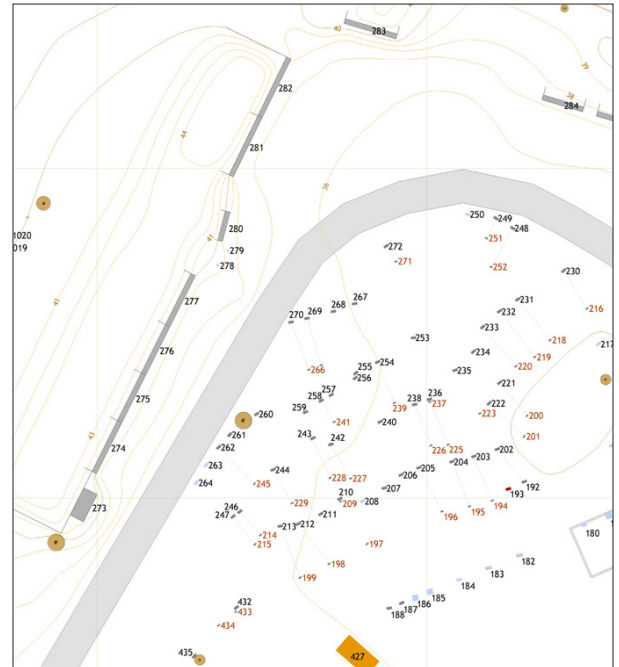
Appendix I | Grass seed specifications

Appendix J | Detailed grave marker condition assessment *

Appendix K | Detailed grave marker treatment recommendations *

Appendix L | Record photographs *

* Due to size, these materials are included in three-ring binders separate from the Plan, and on disc



Marker + tomb locus map detail



Tombs Exposed + deteriorating structure



Paths Narrow, uneven surfaces, obstructions

The Cemetery at a glance





Recommended Actions

As a result of the inventory and analysis of Hancock Cemetery's resources and conversations with the consulting team's advisors in the City, a prioritized list of remedial and preventive actions has been developed for each category in the study. These short- and medium-range activities are summarized here. For budgeting and planning purposes the estimated costs of these efforts are shown in a chart in the *Implementation* section below.

Grave marker repairs

Two primary objectives inform the prioritizing of gravestone treatment (a) forestalling the toppling of gravestones with potential for breakage, loss or safety hazard; and (b) preserving the unique *information* recorded on the stones—names, dates, verses, imagery, etc.

The stones recommended for urgent intervention include 105 objects that only need to be reset in the ground and 51 that require restoration treatment by a *specialized contractor*. (See the *Implementation* section, for a discussion of contractor selection.)

[Refer to the Main Report, Appendix K, for detailed grave marker treatment recommendations.]

Tomb repairs

Sixty of the 85 tombs in the Cemetery are recommended for priority treatment as follows:

- Remove trees that are growing adjacent to tomb walls. Where roots have infiltrated the masonry, this can involve removing and rebuilding the masonry.
- Keep all tombs permanently covered with soil and grass. Replenish sod that has eroded on an annual basis.
- Install small retaining walls in the locations on the tombs where they are missing or have fallen down. New walls should mimic historic forms and materials in the Cemetery.
- Replace cement parging that has been placed over the gaps between front walls and the vaults, where it is cracked or separating from the stone.

Refer to the Main Report, Appendix E, for specific treatment recommendations for each tomb.

Tree work

Arboricultural services are needed to address two significant problems, in decreasing levels of priority:

- Trees that are impacting tombs should be removed.
- Trees with potential to impact tombs in the future, or trees in poor health should be removed and replaced with new shade or ornamental specimens. (See Appendix H of the full Report, "Tree selection Guidelines.")
- Overhanging limbs and branches with potential to break and fall should be regularly pruned and or removed.

Note: the trees of Hancock Cemetery play a significant role in creating its character as a pleasant, leafy retreat. Care should be taken to ensure that this character is maintained by phasing removals and replacing appropriately.

Site work + fences

The items in this category are distinguished by the fact that design plans and specifications are necessary prior to construction. They include:

- Rear fence replacement
- Path reconstruction
- Turf re-establishment
- Miscellaneous informational signs
- Front fence and gates*

**Note: The condition and restoration issues for the the cast iron fence at the front of the Cemetery were assessed, but cost estimates were outside the study scope.*

After the study was completed, Halvorson Design discussed the findings with a foundry specializing in cast iron restoration, who estimated the cost of treatment to be approximately \$64,000.

Recommended Actions

Maintenance

Gravemarkers.

Other than simple resetting, all treatment of the stones themselves is considered conservation and should only be undertaken by persons experienced in this particular work.

The most important maintenance issue for markers is avoiding any future damage from lawn mowers. (See turf maintenance recommendations.)

Tombs.

Some basic maintenance and repairs to mound tombs such as repointing and resetting shifted units may be appropriate for implementation by experienced municipal personnel or by outside contractors experienced in the repair of historic masonry. Structural repairs to mound tombs, particularly rebuilding damaged vaults or toppled tomb fronts requires the input of specialized contractors who have experience rebuilding traditional masonry structures.

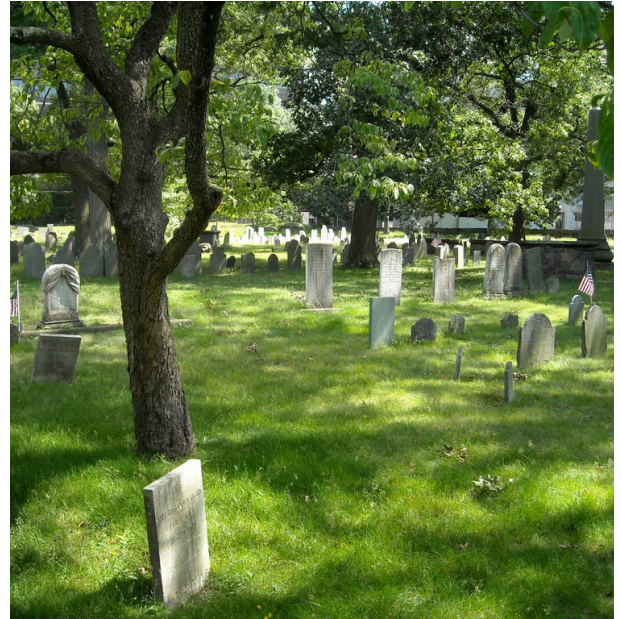
As with all masonry and contracting work there are economies of scale that can be achieved by grouping similar tasks together in the same contract. If possible, dissimilar tasks, such as gravestone conservation and tomb repair should be bid out in separate contracts.

Trees.

Preventive tree care is one of the most important tasks that the City can undertake to protect grave markers due to the risk to markers and monuments of falling limbs during an ice storm, nor'easter or hurricane.

Inspect trees annually (or more often if needed, for example after severe storms) to identify hazardous trees that should be pruned or removed.

Develop an annual work plan for removal and pruning, with priority given to trees that present a hazard to burial markers and visitors. Care should be taken not to damage burial markers during the work, which will require special care as heavy equipment cannot get to most parts of the burying ground so work will have to be done by hand. In most cases of tree removal, trunks should be crowned at 3" below grade and the roots left to decay in place.



Lawns + turf.

Damage from lawn mowers is by far the most prevalent form of monument degradation at Hancock Cemetery, affecting more than 600 objects. Ensuring that this avoidable hazard no longer occurs is a major recommendation of this study. No ride-on mowers should ever be used.

"Walk-behind" mowers should have bumper guards installed. This can best be achieved by attaching closed-cell foam (such as that used for insulating pipes) using cable ties on the sides, front and rear of all mowers used in the Cemetery. Even with bumpers, mowers should never be used any closer than 6" from any monument. Cutting of grass within the 6" buffer may be done using a rotating string trimmer, provided that the "string" must be nylon filament with a gauge of 0.09", or less.

Implementation

The preparation of this Master Conservation Plan is timely—for two reasons:

- With the earliest historical reference to Hancock Cemetery in 1640, Quincy has the opportunity to use 2015 as an implementation target, in time to celebrate the Cemetery's 375th birthday.
- Adams Green, the ambitious transformation of Quincy's civic center, considers the abutting Hancock Cemetery as one of its major components. That project's design and construction process is underway right now. There would appear to be significant potential for coordinating the implementation of the Cemetery and the new park.

Budget + phasing

The estimated costs of implementing the Plan's preservation recommendations are detailed in the full Report. In each category of work, both short and longer term priorities have been identified. For planning and budgeting purposes, these costs are summarized here. Breakdowns and assumptions of these combined figures can be found in the full Report.

Summary of estimated implementation costs *

Category	Priority 1	Priority 2	TOTAL
Gravestones	\$ 63,000	\$ 86,000	\$ 149,000
Tombs	102,900		102,900
Tree Work	20,000	20,000	40,000
Site work (including fences)	269,100		269,100
<i>Design (10%)</i>	<i>26,900</i>		<i>26,900</i>
TOTAL - Construction	\$ 481,900	\$ 106,000	\$ 587,900
<i>Admin/oversight (10%)</i>	<i>48,200</i>	<i>10,600</i>	<i>58,800</i>
TOTAL - All costs	\$ 530,100	\$ 116,600	\$ 646,700

* Breakdown of these combined figures are found in the body of the Report.

Implementation

A few comments on the particular nature of working in a historic cemetery . . .

The need for specialized contractors.

Working on historic gravestones, monuments and tombs, is similar to other kinds of historic preservation. Specialized skills and experience are necessary to ensure that the objects are not harmed in the process of repair. This is a critical point. A great deal of permanent damage can be done to a two hundred year old stone in a matter of minutes by someone who is not trained specifically as a gravestone conservator. For this reason, designing a contractor selection process that ensures that only proposers qualified to undertake each task are eligible to be considered.

The pool of firms that are qualified to work in historic cemeteries and burying grounds in New England is relatively small but growing. As more firms become qualified to do cemetery conservation work it is likely that prices for certain tasks will continue to come down

[For those markers that this study has identified as needing "resetting only," such work may be performed by municipal cemetery employees or by contractors who specialize in landscape work.]

The need for archaeological consultation.

Anywhere below the surface of the ground at a site like Hancock Cemetery could contain historically significant objects(such as pipes or pottery) or information (such as soil characteristics showing that a fire occurred.) Of course, there is always the chance in a cemetery that previously unknown burial remains could exist. Hancock Cemetery has a few known, unmarked, subterranean tombs. There could easily be more.

Accordingly, a trained archaeologist should be on hand *whenever* digging will reach more than 6" below the surface. This will occur when: paths are reconstructed with a new subbase; trees are planted; in the rebuilding or tomb structures, etc

Several consulting archaeology contractors serve eastern Massachusetts, and executing an on-call contract with such an individual or firm, to be on site when the digging actually occurs, is recommended.



Ivan Myjer and Miroslav Maler of Building & Monument Conservation demonstrate repair of a broken slate marker. [ID #63]

Acknowledgement + thanks



City of Quincy

The Honorable Thomas P. Koch, Mayor



Planning + Community Development Department

Dennis E. Harrington, Director

Nicholas Verenis, Project Manager

This project was supported by funding provided by
The Community Preservation Act

upon application from the
Quincy Historical Commission

Anthony Ricci, Chair

Erin Hunt AIA, Project Manager

Dr. Edward Fitzgerald, Quincy Historical Society

Advisors also included

Thomas Galvin, Chair, Quincy Cemetery Board

Richard McNeice, Retired Cemetery Foreman

Paul Hennessey, Cemetery Foreman

Kelly Cobble, Adams National Historic Park, NPS

Halvorson Design Partnership

Prime consultant; historic landscape architecture

Sutherland Conservation & Consulting

Grave markers

Building & Monument Conservation

Tombs and walls; training workshop

Shary Page Berg *History*

Northern Geomatics

GPS survey + mapping

